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5 Arrested in Hyannis Fire

Cape and Islands District Attorney Michael O'Keefe, State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan, Hyannis Fire Chief Harold S. Brunelle and Barnstable Police Chief Paul McDonald announced that five people have been charged in the April 4, 2008 early morning fire at 50 Hirimar Road in Hyannis.

The five are: Joshua Debonise, age 19 of Hyannis; Tiffany Mason, 20 of Hyannis, Andrew Nickerson, age 19 of Mashpee; Victor Mason, age 20 of East Boston; and Jose Reyes, age 22 of Fitchburg. All five were charged with arson of a dwelling and attempted murder. Jose Reyes was also charged with possession of an infernal machine.

State Fire Marshal said, "Great police work by the Barnstable Police, State Police in the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the State Police at the Medford barracks led to the apprehension of these suspects."

At 2:10 p.m. yesterday, State Police Trooper Wilserd Montana observed a gray 1999 Pontiac Grand Prix commit a marked lanes violation and cut off other cars on Route 99 in Malden. Trooper Montana stopped the Grand Prix just north of Salem Street and observed the driver, Andrew Nickerson, and the passenger, Joshua Debonise, acting nervous, moving around in the car and looking in all directions. Further investigation by State Police revealed that the suspects' Grand Prix was being sought by State Police in the Office of the State Fire Marshal in connection with the Hyannis fire. Troopers removed the suspects from the car and recovered a large knife from the vehicle. Also recovered from a suspect was a key to an area motel room, and further investigation revealed that other suspects might be in that room. Nickerson and Debonise were taken into custody.

State Police troopers began an investigation to find the motel from which the key had been issued. Further investigation led the troopers to the Colonial Traveler Motor Court on Route 99 in Saugus. Troopers determined that three additional suspects were at the motel, two of whom fled into the woods behind the motel as troopers approached. During

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the foot pursuit into the woods that ensued, State Police K9 Unit Trooper John Fallon and his German shepherd, “Richter,” tracked and apprehended suspect Jose Reyes. After Reyes was secured, the K9 Unit returned to the woods and “Richter” picked up the scent of the second fleeing suspect, Victor Mason. The dog led troopers to Mason, who was also taken into custody.

State Troopers Michael Peters and Steven Cunningham from the Office of the State Fire Marshal responded to the Medford barracks and questioned the suspects in the on-going investigation.

Chief Brunelle said, “It is so fortunate that no one was hurt and everyone escaped safely. This could so easily have been multiple death fire with three children sleeping in the room where the fire started.”

The fire was jointly investigated by the Hyannis Fire Department, the Barnstable Police Department and state police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office is prosecuting the case.